

Project **SUCCESS**

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Program developers or their agents provided the Model Program information below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Project SUCCESS (Schools Using Coordinated Community Efforts to Strengthen Students) prevents and reduces substance abuse among high-risk, multiproblem high school adolescents, 14 to 18 years of age, by placing highly trained professionals in schools to provide a full range of substance use prevention and early intervention services. These include normative and preventive education, counseling and skills training, problem identification and referral, community-based processes, and environmental approaches. This program was developed and tested in alternative schools.

Program Background

Project SUCCESS began in September 1995 in three alternative secondary schools in Westchester County, NY, funded with a 3-year Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) High-Risk Youth Grant. The program is based on the effective Residential Student Assistance Program (RSAP) model, which had been used in residential facilities for troubled adolescents beginning in 1987 and which, in turn, was adapted from the Westchester Student Assistance Program. The latter program used interventions based on those developed for employee assistance programs.

Project SUCCESS was designed to determine if the RSAP model could be adapted with adolescents at very high risk for substance abuse who were attending public alternative schools and living at home.

RECOGNITION

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Model Program



INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE CLASSIFICATION (IOM)

SELECTIVE, INDICATED

Participants typically came from low- to middle-income families, and 30 percent had parents who abused substances.

INTERVENTION TYPE

SCHOOL-BASED

CONTENT FOCUS

ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS, TOBACCO, PARENT COMPONENT

The program focuses on general substance use and abuse.

Parent involvement as an adjunct strategy:

Parents are involved through the formation of a Parent Advisory Committee to help set parent priorities for the program and participation in a Parent Empowerment Series—parent training sessions and parent support groups.

INTERVENTIONS BY DOMAINS

INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, PEER, COMMUNITY

INDIVIDUAL

- Institutional placement or individual counseling
- Life/social skills training

FAMILY

- Family therapy
- Parent education/parenting skills training
- Task-oriented family education sessions to improve family interactions (e.g., parent involvement in program homework assignments, etc.)

PEER

- Peer-resistance education

COMMUNITY

- Education to alter perceptions of societal norms and expectations
- Multiagency activities and collaboration

KEY PROGRAM APPROACHES

COUNSELING, INFORMATION SHARING, IN-SCHOOL CURRICULA,
PARENT TRAINING, PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL,
SKILL DEVELOPMENT, OTHER: SCHOOLWIDE AWARENESS ACTIVITY

COUNSELING

An individual assessment and time-limited individual sessions or group counseling for students following participation in the Prevention Education Series. There are seven different counseling groups for students to participate in.

Parent Support Groups are offered either through self- or other referrals to focus on issues raised by those in attendance.

The program also strongly recommends the formation of a Parent Advisory Group to provide a forum for parents to share ideas for the program and to establish priorities for Project SUCCESS activities to address parents' concerns.

IN-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Prevention Education Series: a series of eight prevention education/small discussion groups delivered in class on topics such as being an adolescent, correcting erroneous beliefs, and problem-solving/decisionmaking skills for dealing with pressure and stress.

PARENT TRAINING

The Parent Empowerment Series consists of four parenting workshops, preceded by a large kick-off meeting. This component provides substantive prevention information, affirms parents' caring and expertise on child rearing, and provides an opportunity for informal socializing and social support. It also provides an opportunity for the youth to see positive interaction between school staff and parents. It is recommended that a meal, transportation, childcare, and incentives for attendance be provided to the parents.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL

Students who require treatment or more intensive counseling or other services are referred to appropriate agencies or practitioners in the community.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Resistance and social competency skills are taught as part of the Prevention Education Series.

OTHER: SCHOOLWIDE AWARENESS ACTIVITY

The program uses announcements, posters, contests, special assemblies, and other activities in conjunction with national events such as Red Ribbon Week, National Children of Alcoholics Awareness Week, and The Great American Smoke Out.

HOW IT WORKS

A partnership is established between a prevention agency and alternative school. An individual with a graduate degree in social work, counseling, or psychology, who is experienced in providing substance abuse prevention counseling to adolescents, is recruited to work in the alternative school as a Project SUCCESS Counselor (PSC). This individual will provide the school with a full range of substance abuse prevention and early intervention services to help decrease risk factors and enhance protective factors related to substance abuse. Program components include:

Substance abuse education

- **Prevention Education Series**—An eight-session substance abuse prevention education program conducted by the PSC.

Problem identification and referral

- **Individual Assessment**—Following the Prevention Education Series, students are seen individually by the PSC to determine their level of substance use, family substance abuse, and the need for additional services.
- **Individual and Group Counseling**—Following assessment, a series of 8 to 12 time-limited individual or group sessions are conducted in the school. Students attend one of seven different groups based on their developmental differences, substance use, and family history of substance abuse. Individual sessions are scheduled as needed.
- **Referral**—Counselors refer students and parents who require treatment, more intensive counseling, or other services to appropriate agencies or practitioners in the community.

Parent training

Parent Programs—Parents attend an evening dinner meeting with a speaker who discusses what they can do to prevent and reduce substance use.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

Project SUCCESS requires formation of a partnership between a substance abuse prevention organization that will administer the program and an alternative school where it will operate. Specific staff participants include:

- **School Principal** who establishes the initial implementation agreement, selects the counselor, oversees the program, and supervises the counselor onsite
- **Executive Director/Project Director** who initiates and manages the program, develops procedures, and hires staff
- **Project SUCCESS Counselor (PSC)** who implements the program at the school, consults with the principal and teachers, engages in informal outreach activities with students and their parents, and provides all prevention and early intervention services to students
- **Project Supervisor** who supervises the PSC and helps coordinate activities with school staff

Program staff and administrators need to address the following steps:

- 1) Define program goals and objectives
- 2) Define intended population
- 3) Provide training and consultation for school staff
- 4) Establish a school staff substance abuse task force
- 5) Obtain technical assistance and training

A 75-page implementation manual is available for \$150. The manual includes resource material for professionals and worksheets for students. Onsite and offsite training of varying lengths up to 5 days also is available.

OUTCOMES

DECREASES IN SUBSTANCE USE, REDUCTIONS IN NEGATIVE ATTITUDES/BEHAVIORS, OTHER TYPES OF OUTCOMES

DECREASES IN SUBSTANCE USE

Compared with comparison group, Project SUCCESS adolescents showed a 37% overall decrease in substance use.

Of the adolescents using substances, 23% of those in Project SUCCESS quit using, compared to 5% in comparison group.

For adolescents who did not quit using substances, there still was a 17% to 26% reduction in mean substance use among Project SUCCESS participants.

Posttest data on previous 30-day use revealed that of students in the second year of Project SUCCESS who reported using at pretest:

33% reported no longer using alcohol.

45% reported no longer using marijuana.

23% reported no longer using tobacco.

REDUCTIONS IN NEGATIVE ATTITUDES/BEHAVIORS

There was a decrease in problem behavior.

There were decreased associations with peers who used substances.

OTHER TYPES OF OUTCOMES

Project SUCCESS helps adolescents with emotional, learning, and behavioral problems expressed in behaviors such as fighting, cutting class, and talking back to teachers. The program teaches resistance and social competency skills for:

- Communication
- Decisionmaking
- Stress and anger management
- Problem solving
- Resisting peer pressure

EVALUATION DESIGN

A pretest and posttest comparison group design was used with a total sample of 425 adolescents. Participants in two of the schools were randomly assigned to Project SUCCESS or to a non-program control condition. In the third school, classrooms were randomly assigned to participate in Project SUCCESS or a non-program control condition. Students assigned to the non-program condition in these three schools were used as a school control group. Additionally, two schools that did not have a Project SUCCESS program were used as a second comparison condition.

DELIVERY SPECIFICATIONS

5–24 WEEKS

Amount of time required to deliver the program to obtain documented outcomes:

Prevention Education Series: 8 sessions for groups of 8 to 10 students starting at the beginning of the school year and covering 4 topics.

Counseling: 8 to 12 time-limited counseling group sessions with individual sessions scheduled as needed.

Parent Empowerment Series: 4 sessions, meeting once a week for 4 weeks.

Referrals as needed.

INTENDED SETTING

URBAN, SUBURBAN, RURAL

The intended setting is an alternative school.

FIDELITY

Components that must be included in order to achieve the same outcomes cited by the developer:

- Use the Prevention Education Series provided in the implementation manual.
- Conduct an assessment before individual or group counseling.
- Conduct the schoolwide awareness activities.
- Refer students or parents who need substance abuse, mental health, or other types of treatment to community agencies.

Optional components or strategies and how they were determined to be optional:

An optional resource is the Parent Empowerment Series.

BARRIERS AND PROBLEMS

NO INFORMATION PROVIDED

PERSONNEL

FULL TIME, PAID

School Principal: establishes initial implementation agreement, selects the counselor, oversees the program, and supervises the counselor on site.

Executive/Project Director: initiates and manages the program, develops procedures, hires staff.

Project SUCCESS Counselor: implements the program at the school, consults with the principal and teachers, engages in informal outreach activities with students and parents, and

provides all prevention and early intervention services to students.

Project Supervisor: supervises the counselor and helps coordinate activities with school staff.

It is recommended that a School Substance Abuse Task Force be established.

EDUCATION

UNDERGRADUATE, GRADUATE

PERSONNEL TRAINING

Type: SEMINAR/WORKSHOP, Location: ONSITE (user), OFFSITE (at developer or trainer's location)

The developer offers a 5-day training session in Tarrytown, NY, or will provide onsite training for unlimited number of participants.

COST (estimated in U.S. dollars)

\$1,001–\$5,000

\$5,001–\$10,000

Cost considerations for implementing this program as recommended by the developer:

TRAINING

For training in Westchester County, NY \$80 per person, per day, plus travel
(includes manual and video) and per diem costs or \$375 for 5 days,
plus travel and per diem

Onsite training \$1,200 per day for 5 days,
plus travel and per diem

MATERIALS

Implementation Manual \$150

The manual includes a section on (1) administrative strategies for setting up the program; recruiting staff; defining goals, objectives, and intended population; providing training and consultation for school staff; establishing a school staff substance abuse task force; and obtaining technical assistance and training; (2) clinical strategies including the Prevention Education Series, student assessments, individual and group counseling, parent programs, and referrals; (3) the curriculum for the Prevention Education Series; and (4) evaluation recommendations and sample forms.

STAFF COSTS

Salary for full-time master's-level counselor, fringe benefits, and supporting costs.

INTENDED AGE GROUP

EARLY ADOLESCENT (12–14), TEENAGER (15–17), YOUNG ADULT (18–24)

The program focuses on high school-age youth, 14 to 18 years old.

INTENDED POPULATION

AFRICAN AMERICAN, ASIAN AMERICAN, HISPANIC/LATINO, WHITE

The program is effective with African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, and White youth.

GENDER FOCUS

BOTH GENDERS

The program was developed for both male and female students.

REPLICATIONS

NO INFORMATION PROVIDED

ADAPTATIONS

NO INFORMATION PROVIDED

CONTACT INFORMATION

ABOUT THE DEVELOPER

Student Assistance Services (SAS) Corporation of Tarrytown, NY, developed Project SUCCESS. SAS is a private, nonprofit, community-based substance abuse prevention organization. SAS was formed in 1985 when its core program, the Student Assistance Program, spun off from the Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health, which had operated it since 1979.

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